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News Release

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AGENCY, PARTNERS POOL $4.8 MILLION TO REMOVE 91 FISH PASSAGE BARRIERS IN 26 STATES

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the agency's partners will pool $4.8 million in 2004 to remove 91 barriers to fish passage in 26 states.

Service funds for the popular Fish Passage Program, amounting to $2.8 million, will be supplemented by another $2 million in matching funds from a wide array of partners ranging from civic and conservation organizations, local and State governments and other Federal agencies.

"Since 2001, the Fish Passage Program has removed 158 barriers across the country," said Interior Secretary Gale Norton. "The Service, working with local communities and partner agencies, is using a voluntary, non-regulatory approach to restore natural flows and fish migration. Rivers are running their natural course, habitat has been restored, and the fish are coming back."

"Our partners in this program enable us to really stretch taxpayer's dollars," Director Steve Williams said. "That gives us a budget that lets us do far more than we could if we were in this alone. It's all voluntary, and it remains one of the most popular programs."

The Fish Passage Program works to remove obstructions in waterways that prevent fish from reaching spawning grounds or historic habitat. Projects can be as small as inserting culverts under roads or railroad tracks or as large as the removal, last February, of the 95-year-old Embrey Dam near Fredericksburg, by a military explosives team.

Many of the small dams targeted for removal date as far back as the American and Industrial Revolutions. Those dams were built either to accommodate early barge traffic or to provide power or irrigation for a young country. As times changed, many of the dams were abandoned but remained in place, serving only to block populations of fish and contributing to their gradual decline.

Completion of the 2004 projects will open 19,364 acres and more than 3,048 miles of waterways for fish, contributing to larger populations and more recreational fishing opportunities. **The following is a list of projects in the Pacific Region and the Service's share of funding:**

Fish Passage Structure at Shasta Water User Association Dam - Yreka, California
$24,183
The Shasta River is a major tributary to the Klamath River and supports substantial populations of Chinook salmon, as well as steelhead and federally listed coho salmon. This project will provide improved fish passage for adult and juvenile salmonids at a major water diversion point, and also result in improved water quality. The project is a multi-agency partnership involving the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Shasta Water Association, Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District, California Department of Fish and Game, and Fish and Wildlife Service.

Toboggan Creek - Orofino, ID
$13,000
The Toboggan Bridge project will replace the existing culvert with a bridge, opening up18 additional miles of spawning and early rearing habitat for adult and juvenile bull trout, a threatened species, and westslope cutthroat trout, a sensitive species. Other aquatic organisms will benefit as well.

Jackknife Creek - Orofino, ID
$13,000
A culvert on Jackknife Creek on the Clearwater National Forest will be replaced in 2004, opening up five additional miles of bull trout habitat.

Squaw Creek - Orofino, ID
$2,336
A bridge or major culvert will open up five miles of habitat in for bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout in Squaw Creek on the Clearwater National Forest. Construction is expected to being in 2005.

Truckee River - Sparks, NV
$81,880
In partnership with the City of Sparks, an improved diversion system will be created to provide reliable water diversions for the city while improving fish passage and river function. Without improved fish passage in the main stem of the Truckee River in Nevada, recovery of Lahontan cutthroat trout will be hampered significantly. Connectivity and function in the Truckee River Basin are key to restoring a migratory corridor for the largest cutthroat trout species in the world.

Pants Creek - Thurston County, WA
$41,768
This project will re-open fish passage on Pants Creek, a tributary to the Black River, by replacing a culvert located in Thurston County. This project will replace a perched and undersized culvert with an appropriately sized and placed culvert. All designs will meet Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife standards as outlined in the document "Fish Passage Design at Road Culverts".

Cedar Creek - Ione, Pend Oreille County, WA

$73,600
Upon completion of this project and the removal of Ione's water supply dam, fish passage for bull trout will be fully restored to Cedar Creek, which is proposed as critical habitat for bull trout. Restoration of fish passage to Cedar Creek is identified in the draft Bull Trout Recovery Plan as necessary for recovery of bull trout in the Pend Oreille Core Area. Currently, fish passage is blocked by the water supply dam for the town of Ione. The town has been ordered by the DOE to remove or repair the dam by October 2004. Downstream of the dam are 3 partial barriers to fish passage: a set of undersized culverts at a private road crossing, an early-1900s era failed log crib dam, and a cement ford. This project would include replacing the culverts with either a bridge (40-50' span) or a single culvert of appropriate size. The project would also include partial to full removal of the log crib dam, removal of sediment accumulation behind dam, reconstruction of channel to an appropriate gradient (5-6% for 80 feet upstream of dam), and riparian restoration. A third component of the project would include the removal of the cement ford.

Washington Culvert Inventory - Ilwaco, Ridgefield, and Longview, WA
$50,600
Stream crossings on Service lands will be assessed to determine fish passability. These lands include, but are not limited to, those within Willapa and Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuges and Abernathy Fish Technology Center. Habitat assessments will be conducted for those stream crossings that are fish barriers in order to develop a prioritized list for future replacement.

St. Andrews Drive Culvert Replacement – St. Andrews, WA
$68,632
The current crossing on St. Andrews Drive consists of three culverts that bar upstream fish migration. They would be replaced by a 16-foot by 9-foot bottomless arch culvert and a streambed would be installed in the bottom of the culvert, in accordance with State of Washington criteria. All disturbed ground would be planted with native species.

Satsop Clogualium Road – Satsop County, WA
$40,112
The proposed project would replace the existing 7-foot by 10-foot culvert with a 15-foot by 22-foot culvert and a streambed would be installed in the bottom of the culvert. The replacement culvert has been designed to meet the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's criteria. Areas disturbed during installation would be planted with native vegetation.

White Salmon River (Condit Dam) - Underwood, WA
$33,686
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will participate in the development of a cooperative plan to restore bull trout, salmon and steelhead stocks of the White Salmon River in southwestern Washington. Staff from the Service's Abernathy Fish Technology Center will participate in the evaluation of the restoration strategies implemented according to the cooperative restoration plan. Existing populations will be monitored to observe impacts resulting from dam removal, the use of hatchery supplementation to increase these populations, and habitat enhancement. Information collected will be used to guide restoration and recovery programs and identify new management strategies. This is a shared project with the Columbia River Fisheries Program Office (1999-008),

the Lower Columbia Fish Health Center, Ecological Services and White Salmon River co-managers and watershed groups.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies